

October 21, 2014

**COMMENTS OF JOANNE KILGOUR, DIRECTOR OF THE SIERRA CLUB
PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER TO DEP'S CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your work on this Council.

Good morning, my name is Joanne Kilgour and I am the Director of the Sierra Club PA Chapter. Our Chapter has more than 24,500 members statewide with 10 volunteer-led groups in each region of the Commonwealth. Many of these members live or work in areas with natural gas development.

Yesterday, documents were filed with the Washington County, PA Court of Common Pleas showing that in its regional Marcellus Shale Short-Term Ambient Air Sampling Reports, the Pennsylvania DEP withheld certain key findings related to the presence of harmful air pollutants near natural gas facilities, including carcinogens and other dangerous toxins. The depositions of two DEP employees assert that the studies omit measurements of key air toxics and calculate health risks of just two of more than two dozen pollutants.

State regulators and industry representatives over the past four years have repeatedly used the regional studies to support their positions that air emissions from drilling, fracking wastewater impoundments, and compressor stations pose no public health risk. Despite concerns about the limitations of these studies raised by citizen's groups such as the Group Against Smog and Pollution, the Clean Air Council, and the Sierra Club, DEP continued to rely on them and assure the public that natural gas facilities did not pose an air quality threat to human health.

The documents were filed as part of a civil case in which three families allege that air and water pollution from Range Resources' Yeager drilling and 13.5-million gallon fracking wastewater impoundment in Washington County made them sick. The chemicals emitted from shale gas development sites include known carcinogens and potent toxins, and yet - as stated above - the public has been assured repeatedly that emissions from natural gas development pose threat to human health.

Due to the gravity of this situation, and the potential risk to thousands of families living in close proximity to natural gas facilities such as those involved in the suit referenced herein, I appeal to you today to request that the Department withdraw these studies - including the Department's 2010 Southwestern PA Marcellus Shale Short-Term Ambient Air Sampling Report and the Department's 2011 Northeastern PA Marcellus Shale Short-Term Ambient Air Sampling Report - and issue a statement alerting the public as to the reason for this withdrawal. These studies may have erroneously encouraged the public living near natural gas development that the air they breathe every day is safe and poses no health risk to them or their families, and we owe it to these individuals to correct this error and protect the health of PA families.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.